The Malaspina 2010–11 Expedition

Exploring the footprints of Global Change on the Ocean and the Biodiversity of the Deep Sea

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On December 15, 2010, the Expedition Malaspina 2010 sailed off from Cadiz, Spain, to circumnavigate the global oceans. The research vessel BIO Hesperides steamed from Spain to Rio de Janeiro, from where it headed to Cape Town, Perth, Sydney, Honolulu and Cartagena de Indias, with arrival to Cartagena, Spain, planned for mid July 2011.

The expedition aims to: (1) provide a large-scale coherent inventory of physical, chemical, and biological measurements that may shed light on the footprints of global change on the open ocean ecosystems; (2) explore deep-sea microbial and genetic diversity across the world’s oceans; (3) leave a collection of samples of organisms, DNA/RNA, and organic matter for the next generation of researchers; (4) build cooperative frameworks within the Spanish oceanographic community; (5) promote scientific vocations among Spanish youth, and train a new generation of young scientists with a global outlook to ocean ecosystems; (6) celebrate the 200th anniversaries of the birth of Charles Darwin (1809) and the death of Alessandro Malaspina (1810), who led the first Spanish scientific circumnavigation, and raise awareness on his expedition; and (7) inform society of all aspects above, with a dual emphasis on the impacts of global change on ocean ecosystems and the opportunities for exciting discoveries in the exploration of deep-sea biodiversity. The talk will include a historical introduction to the XVIIIth century Malaspina expedition.